

AN  
ORATION,

ON THE  
TRUTH OF THE MOSAIC HISTORY  
OF THE CREATION ;

DELIVERED

AT

NEW - H A V E N,

ON THE  
PUBLIC COMMENCEMENT,

SEPTEMBER, A. D. 1798.

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BY EBENEZER GRANT MARSH.

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## AN ORATION.

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MODERN infidels have attacked few subjects, with less consideration, than that respecting the creation of the world. As neither the philosophy nor antiquity of the Mosaic history coincides with their speculative opinions, on this subject, they have imbibed the notion, that it is a mere fiction, and not worthy serious attention. An attempt to exhibit the falsity of this opinion, and establish the scriptural account of the creation, will not, it is presumed, be an uninteresting subject.

THE numerous absurd and fanciful hypotheses, adopted both by ancient and modern philosophers, with respect to the origin of the world, sufficiently prove the necessity of revelation on this subject. To exhibit even a partial detail of the several systems, would exceed the limits of a moderate volume. It will readily be acknowledged, however, that a summary view, of the most important of them, will have the double effect of displaying their in-

confiſſencies and abſurdities, and of exhibiting a more complete proof of the truth of the Moſaic hiſtory.

THE ſeveral opinions, either of the ancients or moderns, on this ſubject, may be comprised under one or other of the following three.

FIRST, That the world is eternal, both as to its matter and form, neither having origin, nor being liable to corruption. Or

SECONDLY, That the matter of the world is eternal, but not the form. Or

LASTLY, That the world had a beginning, and, of courſe, will ſuffer a diſſolution.\*

THE firſt opinion was openly defended by none among the ancients, except ſome Pſeudo-Pythagoreans, Ariſtotle, and ſeveral of Plato's followers. Inſtead, however, of affirming, as ſome in our own times have done, that the world itſelf is God, or the ſelf-exiſtent and independent Being, theſe philoſophers either barely maintained, that it was neceſſary ſomething ſhould be eternal, which is all ſeveral of the Pythagoreans prove; or, that the world is an “*eternal voluntary* emanation from the “all wiſe and ſupreme cauſe,” which was the opinion of many Platonists; or, that the world *eter-*

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\* Vide Dr. Clarke's Demonſtration of the Being and Attributes of God, p. 32, &c. Lond. 1728.

nally and necessarily flows from the energy of the divine nature, which appears to have been the opinion of Aristotle.\* In this, he was joined by some learned Mohammedans, particularly al Farabi, al Kendi, Ebn Sina, and Ebn Roshd, who were denominated *Dabrians* or *Eternalists*. This dogma was, likewise, embraced by Origen, and, in the sixth century, was permitted to be openly taught in Alexandria, by Ammonius. Some modern philosophers, who maintain the eternity of the world, do not hesitate to affirm, that the material universe, with the *order* and *mode of existence* of every part of it, is self-existent, and the only supreme Deity. This was the opinion of Spinoza, which, indeed, had been before partially adopted by Xenophanes, the founder of the Eleatic sect, Parmenides, Melissus, Zeno of Elea, the elder Pliny, Stilpo, and the Megaric philosophers, Strato of Lampascus, Alexander the Epicurean, some Japanese and Mohammedan sects, likewise, some heretical christians—Amalric, David of Dinant, and the learned Peter Abelard. But none of them proceeded so far, and adopted such a complete system, as Spinoza.†

THE second opinion was, that the materials of the world were eternal, but put into their present order, by principles merely mechanical, or disposed

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\* Cudworth's Intellectual System, p. 250, 251.

† Cosmogony prefixed to the Universal History. Clarke's Dem. p. 26.

by an intelligent mind. The first of these opinions was the cosmogony of some sects among the Egyptians, Phœnicians, Babylonians, and a few of the ancient Pagan poets, likewise of Leucippus, Democritus and Epicurus, the reputed inventors of the atomic system. This supposed, that all things were produced from an infinite number of atoms, which, having been incessantly moving from all eternity, in infinite space, happened, at length, by a fortuitous concourse, to settle into the present system of things.\* This physiology does not appear to have been unknown before, for Anaximander, Aristrophanes, Empedocles, Heraclides, Asclepiades, Diodorus, and Metrodorus Chius, maintained, that indivisible particles, or an infinite first matter, is the principle of all things.† The atomic system has been embraced by several moderns, among whom are Gassendi, Descartes, and the Mohammedan scholastic divines. The second opinion was adopted by Hippasus, Hippocrates, Heraclitus, Diogenes of Apollonia, the Stoicks, the Pandits in India, the Sufis and other learned men in Persia, some sects among the Chinese, the Siamese, and the later Jews, who, holding the eternity of matter, supposed it to be the only substance, and invested with reason. Thales, Pherecydes, Py-

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\* Epicurus held no principle but the atoms themselves, Democritus supposed they were animated.

† Univ. Hist. Cosmogony, p. 40. Lond. 1747. Cudworth's Int. Syl.

thagoras,\* Timæus Locris, Archytas, Anaxagoras, who first, among the Grecian philosophers, held an intelligent being distinct from matter, Aristotle, Archelaus, and Plutarch,† maintained, that there were two distinct coeternal principles, GOD and MATTER. Aristotle supposed, that the world was governed by an unlimited number of forms, qualities, and other imaginary beings.‡ This opinion was supported by Hermogenes, and other ancient pretenders to christianity, and it prevailed till it was supplanted by Descartes, who introduced the atomic philosophy.¶ In none of these systems, which are extremely various and contradictory, is it admitted that GOD is able to create matter, it must, then,

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\* Pythagoras held, that the two self-existent principles were a *monad*, or unity, and a *dyad*, or duality. By the first, it is generally thought, he intended GOD, or an active and intelligent mind; by the second, some suppose he meant a dæmon or a maleficent being, others, matter itself. He affirmed, that all things were formed according to the proportion of numbers. The following is a specimen of his proportions, and the principles, on which was founded the musical system of all nations. If a string be divided into two, three, and four parts, in each half there will be an octave of the whole—in the three fourths, its fourth—in the two thirds, its fifth. The octave, then, will be as one to two—the fourth, as three to four—and the fifth, as two to three. The importance of this proportion induced succeeding philosophers to give to the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, the name of the *sacred quaternary*. *Anacharsis' Travels*. Vol. III. ch. 30.

† Plutarch, Numenius, and Atticus, in order to account for the origin of evil, supposed, that the chaos, or original matter, was animated by a vicious being. It appears, therefore, that they held a third self-existent, and eternal principle. Some mongrel christians, as the Marchionites, Manichæans, and Paulicians, maintained, that there were two self-existent Gods—a good and a bad. They held, that it was impossible, in any other way, to account for the existence of vice. *Univ. Hist.* p. 62, 63, *Cosmog.*

‡ *Travels of Anacharsis*, Vol. III. ch. 26.

¶ This was succeeded by the *Newtonic*.



have existed from eternity, as a passive subject of all the operations of God, or, it is a self-existent being. The first supposition necessarily implies the contradiction of two self-existent beings : The second, that it is impossible to conceive matter to be, or not to be, in any way distinct from what it now is, without a contradiction.\*

THE last opinion, that the world was absolutely created, and is liable to dissolution, was held by the ancient Tuscans or Etrurians, the Druids, the Persian Magi, the old Hindu Brahmans and modern Bramins, the Chinese, the Mohammedans, some of the Japanese, and several of the American Indians.

THE Chinese have been viewed as a refined people, yet they exhibit the following account of the creation ;—That one *Tayn*, who lived in heaven, and was celebrated for his wisdom, disposed the parts of the world into their present order—that he created, from nothing, the first man *Panson*, and his wife *Pansone*—that this Panson, by a power from Tayn, created another man, called *Tanhom*, who was a great naturalist, and thirteen men more, by whom the world was peopled, till after considerable time the sky fell upon the earth, and destroyed

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\* In the statement, which I have given, of the opinions of the Grecian philosophers, I have mentioned those only, which they openly taught. They generally held it lawful, for the public good, to say one thing when they thought another. Hence many held a *double doctrine*, which they called the *External* and *Internal*. For a particular view of several of their *twofold doctrines*, see *Dr. Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses ; Book III. sections 2 and 3.*

them all ;† but that the wife Tayn afterwards created another man, whose name was *Lotziram*, who had two horns, and an odoriferous body, from which proceeded several men and women, who stocked the world with its present inhabitants.‡ —Some of the Brahmans, if we may credit a late writer,§ affirmed, that the Almighty knocked the world into existence by a great cane.—Many of the Hindu Pandits, and Persian Sufis feign, that an immense *spider* was the first cause of all things. They allege, that she wove the web of the universe, and disposed it with great art. Ever since it was completed, she has placed herself in the centre of her work, and directed every motion. When she shall have sufficiently pleased herself in regulating the web, she will draw all the threads she had spun out, into herself, at which time all things will vanish.||—The Mohammedans inform us, “ that the  
 “ first things, which were created, were the *Throne*  
 “ of God, *Adam*, *Paradise*, and a great *Pen*, with  
 “ which GOD wrote his decrees—that the *Throne*  
 “ was carried about upon angels’ necks, whose  
 “ heads were so large, that birds could not fly, in  
 “ a thousand years, from one ear to the other—  
 “ that the heavens were propped up by the moun-

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† Here we observe an evident allusion to the deluge.

‡ Stackhouse’s History of the Bible, Lib. i. c. i.

§ Lord, on the Banian religion.

|| Univ. Hist. p. 48, Cosmog.



“ tain *Koff*—that the stars were firebrands, thrown  
 “ against the devils, when they invaded heaven—  
 “ that the earth stands upon the top of a great  
 “ cow’s horn—that this cow stands upon a white  
 “ stone—this stone upon a mountain, and this  
 “ mountain upon” nobody “ knows what.”\*

How different are all these accounts from what is recorded by Moses, whose history is easily comprehended, comporting with the dignity of God, and not inconsistent with the principles of true philosophy. Were we to consider Moses merely as an historian, without any supernatural powers, were we to judge of his accounts at “ the  
 “ bar of reason,” and to wave the circumstance of their antiquity, there would, notwithstanding, be a credibility attached to them, of which all others are destitute. “ We cannot,” says Stackhouse, “ without admiration, see a person, who had none  
 “ of the systems before him, which we so much  
 “ value, giving us a clearer idea of things, in the  
 “ way of an easy narrative, than any philosopher,  
 “ with all his hard words, and new invented  
 “ terms, has yet been able to do, and, in the com-  
 “ pats of two short chapters, comprising all that

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\* Stackhouse. The Mohammedans, likewise, hold, that God drew out of Adam all his posterity at once, and covenanted with them, that they should acknowledge him to be their Lord. They say that all these people were actually assembled, in the form of pygmies, near Mecca or Dahia, in India ; and, “ after they had, in the  
 “ presence of angels, as witnesses, confessed their dependence on  
 “ God ; they were again caused to return into the loins of their  
 “ great ancestor.” *Koran, ch. 7. Univ. Hist. p. 97. Casnog.*

“ has been advanced with reason, even from his  
 “ own time to this very day.” Had Moses, in-  
 deed, made free use of philosophical phrases, such,  
 for instance, as globular and angular particles—  
 centripetal and centrifugal forces—the mundane  
 or solar system—the atmospheres of comets\*—the  
 earth’s diurnal and annual motions, and the sun’s  
 rest, his observations might, possibly, have been  
 more agreeable to some theorists ; “ but theories,”  
 says a writer, “ depend, in a great measure, upon  
 “ the humor and caprice of an age, which is some-  
 “ times in love with one, and sometimes with a-  
 “ nother.”

It may not be improper, in this part of our  
 subject, to give such an explanation of the history  
 of Moses, as appears most agreeable to the letter of  
 it, and the principles of philosophy.†

GENESIS, ch. i. v. 1. *In the beginning God  
 created the heaven and the earth.*

It cannot be inferred from this expression,  
 that the whole starry heavens were created at the  
 same time with this earth. It is, indeed, probable,  
 from the relation, which the sun and planets, with  
 their satellites, bear to each other, that they were

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\* Mr. Whiston supposes, that the primitive chaos, from which  
 the earth was formed, was the atmosphere of a comet. He did not,  
 probably, reflect, that this atmosphere is not obscure, but pellucid.

† The following paraphrase and several other additions have been  
 made to the Oration, since it was delivered.

all created at the same time,\* and in the same manner, from so many chaotic masses.† But other systems might have been made, many thousand years before ours.‡ By the word *heaven*, Moses unquestionably intended, either the space circumscribed by the path of Herschell, or that of the most distant comet in our system, or, which is most likely, the upper region of the air. The word is used, in this last sense, in many passages of scripture.||

V. 2. *And the earth was without form, and void ; and darkness was upon the face of the deep ; and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*

\* Many philosophers, however, have adopted different opinions. Dr. *Burnet* supposes, that all the celestial bodies, including the sun and planets, were made long before the earth. Without any evidence, he thinks that matter was, originally, under different laws from what it now is.—*Buffon* places the chaos, from which the earth was made, in the sun, but does not inform us, why the sun was created, when there were no bodies for it to enlighten.—*Whiston* holds, that the sun, moon, and stars are all more ancient than the earth. The six days of the creation, he thinks, were six years, the earth having had no diurnal rotation, till after the apostacy. But it is easy to see, that the solar system would have been very imperfect without the planet upon which we live, and we are not warranted, by philosophy, to suppose, that the moon was created before the earth. Farther, if the earth did not move upon its axis, the immoderate degrees of heat and cold would have been destructive both to plants and animals.

† If we suppose, with many, that the sun and planets were made out of the chaos of Moses, we must reject the laws of gravitation, and place the earth in the centre of the system.

‡ From these two passages in the book of Job, *Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?—When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?* (ch. xxxviii. vs. 4, 7.) it has been, with some propriety, inferred, that both stars and angels were made before the formation of the earth. But it must be acknowledged, that this is not complete proof; for the *morning stars* might sing together, and the *sons of God* shout for joy, on account of their own creation, and that of the earth, at the same time.

|| See Gen. i. 20; vii. 11; Job xxxviii. 29, 37, &c.

MOSES here describes the original confused state of matter, and, as a preparatory step for its designed disposition and order, the moving of the Spirit of God upon the waters. By the *Spirit of God*, some understand a violent wind, sent to dry the waters; Grotius and others suppose, it was the third person in the Trinity; and Dr. Cudworth,\* that plastic nature, which was subservient to God, at this time, and which gave a kind of a vivifying virtue to the whole chaotic mass.

THE WORK OF THE FIRST DAY. V. 3. *And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.* 4. *And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.* 5. *And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night: and the evening and the morning were the first day.*

THE description, which Moses here, and in the following verses, gives of the vicissitudes of day and night, before he informs us of the creation of the sun, has generally been considered, by philosophers, as the most objectionable part of his history. But if we examine this difficulty, with attention, we shall find that Moses was a more accurate philosopher than is frequently imagined. If we suppose that the sun was not created till the fourth day, we may conclude, with Abarbinel, a learned *Jew*, that

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\* Intell. System, p. 148, 149.

the previous light was the *Shechinah* ; or, with Dr. Patrick, those fiery particles, which the Almighty produced, “ as the great instrument for the preparation of the rest of matter,” and which, being collected together, moved round the earth in twenty-four hours, or, being dispersed through the whole universe, were excited by God himself. It is not unfrequently maintained, that the sun is the only fountain of light, from which all luminous particles are emitted. But it appears from experiment, that light, if properly excited, may be made to appear in midnight darkness. This is a certain proof, that it exists in darkness before it is excited, and, that it is rendered visible by being excited.\* We may rationally conclude, therefore, that it exists diffused through the whole visible system of things, being agitated, or put in motion, by the sun ; and that it could not be made to appear, without this previous existence, if the hemisphere should be filled with suns. Upon this hypothesis, light might have been created on the first day, and God, alone, might have been the exciter, till the sun was produced.

BUT there appears to be no necessity of resorting to suppositions of this kind. It is certainly,

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\* A candle may be seen, in a dark night, at the distance of three miles. But it is not supposable, that such a small body can furnish a sufficient quantity of light to fill a spherical space six miles in diameter. It is more probable, that the particles, in that space, are excited by the candle. See the treatise on the creation, in Watson's *Theological Tracts*.



much more rational to conclude, from the connexion between all the bodies in the solar system, that the sun and moon were in existence from the commencement of the creation, but could not be seen the three first days, on account of the vapours, and heterogeneous particles, with which the air was filled. It is likely, that their light gradually increased until the fourth day, when these particles had so far subsided, that they began to appear, which may be the reason why they are said to have been made at that time.

THE WORK OF THE SECOND DAY. V. 6. *And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters ; and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters, which were under the firmament, from the waters, which were above the firmament : &c.*

THE atmosphere must have been in some measure cleared the first day, at least, the grosser parts of matter must have subsided, otherwise, the rays of light could not have pierced it. But it was so far perfected on this day, as to be rendered capable of supporting clouds. The waters above the firmament, were, probably, those in the clouds, as those under it, were the waters upon the earth.

THE THIRD DAY'S WORK. V. 9. *And God said, Let the waters under the heaven, be gathered*

*together unto one place, and let the dry land appear : and it was so. 10. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas : and God saw that it was good. 11. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth : and it was so, &c.*

THE first part of this day was employed in gathering the waters, which covered the whole earth, into seas, lakes, &c. in order that the dry land might appear. Dr. Patrick\* supposes, that this was effected by an earthquake, which raised the earth, and made caverns for the waters to run into. This he argues from an expression in *Psalms* civ. 7 ; *At thy rebuke they* (i. e. the waters) *fled : at the voice of thy thunder, they hasted away ;* likewise in *Job xxxviii. 10, And brake up for it,* (i. e. for the sea) *my decreed place, and set bars and doors.* Mr. Whiston is of opinion, that it was occasioned by the different density and specific gravity of the several columns of the earth, which had been gradually sinking from the beginning of the creation, and some of which sunk much lower than others. To this cause he altogether ascribes the inequality of the surface of the earth, and, for a proof of the truth of it, says, that mountainous columns are not so dense and ponderous as others.†

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\* Commentary upon verse 9.

† Theory of the Earth, Book 2.

THE last part of this day's work, was the production of vegetables. It cannot be supposed, that the fecundity of the earth, at that time, was sufficient for such a growth in a day, as is described. It will be allowed, that God formed the seeds of vegetables, and this rapid vegetation may, with equal propriety, be referred to his divine interposition.

THE WORK OF THE FOURTH DAY. V. 14.  
*And God said, Let there be lights, &c. 16. And God made two great lights : the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night : he made the stars also, &c.*

FOR an explanation of what is here said with regard to the sun and moon, see what has been observed respecting light.

FROM the expression, *he made the stars also*, it has been inferred, that the sun, moon and stars were all made at the same time. But the words *he made*, are an interpolation, there being nothing in the Hebrew to warrant them. They were, probably, placed, at first, in the margin of our bibles, and afterwards crept into the text. The Hebrew word *וַיַּעַשׂ* should be translated *together with*. The literal meaning of this passage, then, is, that the *lesser light*,

or the moon, is to rule the night, together with the stars.\*

THE FIFTH DAY'S WORK. V. 20. *And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.*  
21. *And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind, &c.*

AFTER describing the formation of the inanimate world, Moses proceeds to the animate, and begins with fish and fowl, the inferior kinds of animals, both of which were produced, this day, from the waters. The great congruity between these animals shews, that they had the same original. They are both oviparous, which makes them more fruitful than beasts, and there is a resemblance between their method of swimming and flying†. The word תנינִים, translated *great whales* in the 21st verse, means several kinds of great fish. It is rendered *crocodiles* in several places in scripture.†

THE WORK OF THE LAST DAY. V. 24.  
*And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living*

\* Dr. Nicholls' conference with a Theist, Vol. I.

† In Gen. ii. 19, it is said, that God formed the fowls of the air out of the ground. The Jews reconcile this, with what is said above, by supposing, that fish and fowl were formed out of soft mud, in which there is a mixture of both elements. Calmet says, the passage in the 20th verse of this chap. may be rendered, *and let the fowl fly*, &c. *Univ. Hist.*

† Patrick on Gen. i. 21.

*creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth, after his kind : and it was so, &c. 26. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, &c.*

MOSES distributes the animals, which were the first part of this day's work, into three kinds.—

1. Beasts, by which he intended all wild beasts—
2. Cattle, or tame and domestic animals ; and, lastly, creeping things, which include all reptiles, insects, &c.

THE last, and noblest work, was the creation of man. This was attended with a peculiar degree of solemnity. There appears to have been a previous consultation, as it were, of the holy Trinity,\* concerning the creation of a being, who was to bear the image of God, and to be capable of immortality. On the same day, woman was formed out of the side of the man, who had been cast into a deep sleep for that purpose. This original was probably chosen, “ to denote the obliga-

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\* The expression, *Let us make man, &c.* has generally been considered among christians, as a plain intimation of a plurality of persons in the Godhead. A different construction, however, has not unfrequently been put upon it. The Jews are of opinion, that God addressed himself, at that time, to angels. But if they were then created, it is not likely that they would have been employed in the making of man ; “ who was not made in their image, but in “ the image of God.” Others suppose, that it was a majestic form of speech, it being very common for kings and princes to speak in the plural number. But this custom was much later than the days of Moses. Indeed, it was not known till about four or five centuries before our æra. *Patrick's Com. Stackhouse's Hist.*



“ tions to the strictest friendship and society, to be-  
 “ get the strongest love and sympathy” between  
 them, “ as parts of the same whole ; and to re-  
 “ commend marriage to all mankind, as founded in  
 “ nature, and as the reunion of man and woman.”†

SOME philosophers pretend, that the fecundi-  
 ty of the primitive earth, and the influence of the  
 sun, will sufficiently account for the production of  
 plants and animals, without recurring to a divine  
 power. But observation has fully proved, that  
 there can be no such thing as “ equivocal genera-

† Some writers affirm, that the variety of complexion and figure, in the human species, is a strong proof that mankind did not descend from one pair. But it is generally agreed by philosophers, that this variety is owing to climate, and the state of society. *Those, who are not satisfied that these are the true causes, are referred to Dr. S. S. Smith's learned dissertation upon this subject.* It is farther argued, from the circumstance of Cain's going to the land of Nod—his building a city there, &c. that there must have been great numbers of people, at that time, who could not have sprung from Adam. But Adam might have had many children beside those mentioned in scripture. Moses did not intend to give an account of all his descendants, but of those only, who were most remarkable, and whose history was necessary to be known, in order that the genealogy might be preserved. According to the general computation, Abel was slain in the 129th year of Adam's life : For it is expressly said, that Seth was born in the 130th year ; and as he was *appointed instead of Abel*, and was, therefore, to be a comfort to his disconsolate parents, it is likely that he was born the year after his death. So that Cain must have left his own country, in the 129th year of the world, at which time, there might have been, at least, one hundred thousand souls upon the face of the earth. *Stackhouse.* If we suppose, that Adam and Eve had no other sons than Cain and Abel, in the year 128, yet they had daughters, to whom these two were, unquestionably, both married. See Gen. v. 4. If we suppose, that they were married in the 21st year of the world, they might easily have had 8 children in the 28th year. In the 56th year, there might have proceeded from them in a direct line, 64 persons—in the 84th, 512—in the 112th, 4096, and in the 124th, 16,384. If to these be added the other children descended from Cain and Abel, their children, and grand-children, we shall have, in the 124th year, at least 300,000 men, without including women and children.

tion of even the meanest animal or plant.”† It must, therefore, be allowed, that both vegetables and animals were created by a supernatural power, who used the earth and water only as the matter from which he formed their parts.

It is said to be a derogation from the power and dignity of God, to imagine that he should be so long in the work of creation. Such a being, it is affirmed, would speak the universe into existence at once. But it is very rational to suppose, that he employed so long a period, because he considered it as best for the instruction, both of angels and men.\* Angels, who were, unquestionably, created before this time, might have been presented with a more complete view of the perfections and attributes of God, by beholding the work of creation, than they otherwise could have had; and the detail given by Moses of this work, while it furnishes us with a full and comprehensive display of his glory, fills us with wonder and admiration. By the employment of six days in creating the world, it seems to be implied, that the Almighty necessitated himself to continue this work so long, in order that he might exhibit himself a “divine example of weekly labor and sabbatical rest,” and, in this manner, more effectually convince mankind of their obligation to observe the sabbath.

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† See, on this subject, Dr. Clarke’s *Dem. of Being and Attributes of God*. Vol. I. prop. 9.

\* Stackhouse L. I. c. I.

It is not improbable, that a revelation might have been made to Adam of the manner, in which the world was formed, which, without doubt, would be transmitted to his posterity. If Moses, then, had not given a just account, the Israelites, instead of receiving it as true, would have immediately detected its falsity, and pronounced the author an impostor. The length of men's lives previously to Moses, rendered tradition the certain vehicle of information. Accounts, as far back as the origin of man, might have been conveyed by *seven* persons from Adam to Moses. Methuselah conversed with Adam and Noah, Shem with Noah and Abraham, Isaac with Abraham and Joseph, and Amram with Joseph and Moses.\* So that many living, in the time of Moses, might have judged of the fidelity of his history.

THE credibility of the Mosaic cosmogony is, farther, very amply established by collateral evidence. We are furnished with the following heathen fragments, among many others, in which are exhibited several of the sentiments of Moses, on this subject.

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\* The account of the longevity of the first people in the world is confirmed by Hesiod, Hecateus, Hellanicus, Ac silaus, Ephorus, Nicholas, Manetho, the author of the Egyptian history, Berosus, Mochus, and Hestæus, who wrote, that anciently men lived a thousand years. *Josep. Ant. Lib. 1. cap. 4.*

THE EGYPTIANS, as Diodorus Siculus\* informs us, affirmed, that the heavens and earth were, at first, in one lump, mixed and blended together in the same mass.

IN the beginning, says ORPHEUS,† the heaven was made by GOD, and in the heaven there was a chaos or dark night, which covered all things under heaven. This position agrees with that of Moses ; *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and the earth was without form and void, or a chaos, and darkness was upon the face of the deep.*‡ He further declared, that there was a certain *incomprehensible* and *invisible being*, the highest and most ancient of all things, and the maker of the universe—that the earth was invisible, in consequence of the darkness upon it, but that the light broke forth through the heaven, and illuminated the whole creation. This light, he affirms, was the *incomprehensible being* himself, whose name, as revealed by an oracle, was *counsel, light, and the giver of life*, which three names manifest the one and the same power of this invisible GOD. He, likewise, declared, that man was formed out of the earth, by the same Deity, and received from him a rational soul, as Moses has related. He also wrote, in another place, according to Timotheus, that all things were

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\* Lib. 1.

† Orpheus lived in Thrace. He was a celebrated poet, and the inventor of music in Greece. He flourished about 1100 years B. C.

‡ Shuckford's Connexion of Sacred and Profane History, Vol. 1. p. 42, Pref. Lond. 1743.

made by one Godhead of three names, and that this God is all things. He affirmed, that what he delivered on this subject, he received from Phœbus or Titan, and that it was not his own invention.||

SANCHONIATHON, as appears from Eusebius, affirmed, that there was, at first, a dark and confused chaos, from which all things were made. This chaos, he said, was put into a ferment, by a dark and windy air, which he called *ανεμος κολπις*, or *Kol-Pi-Jab*, that is, the wind or breath of the voice of the mouth of the LORD. In this, says, Shuckford, “ he very emphatically expresses God’s making all things with a word ; and intimates, also, “ what the Chaldee paraphrast insinuates from the “ words of Moses, that the chaos was put into its “ first agitation by a strong wind.” He begins mankind from two mortals, *Protogonus* and *Æon*.\*

ANAXAGORAS, as Laertius informs us, began one of his books thus ; All things existed from eternity, in the primitive mass : an intelligent agent imparted activity to this mass, and brought it into order.† In another place he says, “ The beginning “ of all things is *ο νοους*, the Mind, who is the cause “ and Lord of the whole world, who gave order

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|| Universal History, p. 33, Colm.

\* Bedford’s Scripture Chronology. Shuckford’s Connexion. All, which Sanchoniathon gives us concerning the Cosmogony, was taken from the genuine works of Thoth. *Warburton’s Dic. Leg.* Lib. III. Sec. 4. Sanchoniathon wrote about 1000 years B. C.

† Anacharsis Travels, Lib. 30. Anaxagoras flourished about 430 years B. C.



“ to things in disorder, motion to things immove-  
 “ able, distinction to things confused, and beauty  
 “ to things deformed.”\*

ALL things, says ARISTOTLE, were in one mass, for a great length of time, but an intelligent agent put them in motion and thus separated them from one another.†

MAXIMUS TYRIUS asserts, that all nations had a constant tradition, that there was one supreme God, the cause of all things.‡

LINUS mentions, that, at first, all things were confused.||

EPICHARMUS§ and several of the PLATONISTS affirm, that all things were made by the λογος, or word of GOD. The following passage of AMALRIC is particularly observable; “ All things, which ever existed, were made by the *reason* or *word*, according to the opinion of Heraclitus: That same word or reason the *Barbarian* intends, which, in the beginning, set all things in order, and was with GOD before that order, by which every thing was perfected, and in which was every creature—the fountain of life and being.” The *Barbarian*, of whom

\* Patrick's Commentary on Gen. i. 3.

† Shuckford's Con. p. 43, pref. Aristotle wrote about 340 years B. C.

‡ Grotius de Ver. Rel. Christ. in notis ad Lib. i. Sec. 16,

|| Ibidem. Linus flourished about 1000 years B. C.

§ Wrote about 480 years B. C.

Amalric here speaks, is St. John the evangelist, who lived not long before him.\*

ZENO, in his book concerning being, calls the first cause of all things *λογος*, the word. In this he was followed by Cleanthes, Chrysippus, Archedemus, and Passidonius.†

SANCHONIATHON and APOLLONIUS supposed, that all things were made from a chaos‡, which was a fluid substance. This, by settling, became mud, which, in time, “dried and condensed into solid earth.” It is observable that Moses calls the chaos water in this sense—and *the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the מים waters.*||

THALES declared, that the Mind of God produced all things from water, not pure elementary, but muddy water.§

ZENO affirmed, that the chaos in HESIOD, from which all things were made, was water. This

\* Geotius.

† *ibid.* Zeno flourished about 650 years B. C. Cleanthes, Chrysippus, &c. between 200 and 300.

‡ Ovid, in the first book of his *Metamorphosis*, gives the following just description of the primitive chaos :

Anno mare, et terras, et quod tegit omnia, cælum,  
Unus erat toto naturæ vultus in orbe  
Quæ nâ clæere chaos : Radis, indigestaque moles  
Nec ordine quæm, nisi pondus, iners congestaque eodem  
Non bene juncturam discordia semina rerum.

|| Shuckford's *Con.* p. 45, pref.

§ Parrick's *Com.* on Gen. i. 2. Thales flourished about 600 years B. C.

*Met.* whence the Greeks derive their *mothos*, signifies, in Hebrew, *telom*, in Greek, *abyssos*—an abyss already in motion. For *abyssos* in ENNATUS, is nothing but mud :

“From muddy Tartarus a bright gigantic sprung.”

subsiding became mud, and the mud congealing became solid earth.\*

PLUTARCH, in his explanation of PLATO, says, that GOD is the father of the world, not by an emission of seed, but by a certain generative influence instilled into matter, which he elucidates by this similitude :

“ The female bird is oft impregnated

“ By the quick motion of the wind.”†

ARATUS and CATULLUS supposed, that GOD resided above the starry orb, where, says HOMER, there is a continual light. ARATUS held, that the stars were made by GOD.‡

HESIOD says, that darkness was before light.

THE CHALDEANS, PERSIANS, HINDUS, and CHINESE have imbibed the notion, that all things originated from an egg. This opinion was common among the ancient EGYPTIANS|| and GRECIANS. It was first introduced among the latter by Orpheus, who, it is likely, brought it from Egypt. Bishop Patrick and others suppose, that it arose

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\* Grotius. Lib. 1. § 16. Hesiod was a Greek poet, cotemporary with Homer—flourished about 900 years B. C.

† Ibidem.

‡ Ibidem. Aratus was the founder of the Achaian republic. He lived about 220 years B. C.—Catullus, about 80.

|| The Egyptians described their God *Kneph* with an egg proceeding out of his mouth. This “ was a lively representation of “ this world, (denoted by the egg) produced by God’s omnipotent “ word.” *Patrick on Gen. i. 3.*

from the expression of Moses, *and the Spirit of God moved*, literally *BROODED, upon the face of the waters.*||

STRABO§ affirmed, that the earth was originally covered with water, and, in order to fit it for the habitation of man, that God raised it and made many “cavities and receptacles” in it for the water. See *Gen. i. 9.*

VIRGIL¶, speaking of the origin of the world, says, Then the soil began to harden, and shut up the waters within the sea, and things to assume their proper forms. The earth was then struck with the shining of the new sun, and the descending of the showers from the clouds.

THEOPHRASTUS observed, according to Porphyry, that the earth brought forth trees and herbs before beasts.\*

EURIPIDES says, the heaven and earth were, at first, of one form, but when their different parts were separated, there sprang up beasts, fowls and fish; nay, even men themselves.†

PLATO, in his treatise *de Republica*‡, speaks of a Hebrew fable, which describes the fraternity of men, and their derivation from the ground. He

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|| Stackhouse, p. 30, pref.

§ Geography, Lib. xvii. Strabo lived about the time of our Saviour.

¶ Eclog. vi. v. 36—40. Virgil wrote about 40 years B. C.

\* Patrick on *Gen. i. 13.* Theophrastus wrote 250 years B. C.

† Grotius, *ubi supra.*

‡ Lib. iii. p. 414. He flourished about 400 years B. C.

says, that their knowledge of the Deity was communicated to them from the Gods by one Prometheus.

DIODORUS SICULUS§ and PARMENIDES say, that man was made out of the mud or slime of the river *Nile*, which comports with the account of Moses, that *the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground*.

CALLIMACHUS|| calls man *Prometheus'* clay. Mention is made of this clay in JUVENAL and MARTIAL; and of the theft of Prometheus, in many of the other poets.¶

HOMER says,

*You all to earth and water must return†;*

which implies, that man came originally from those elements.

HESIOD, speaking of the formation of man, mentions, that Mulciber ordered earth and water to be mixed without delay, and a human voice to be infused.‡

EURIPIDES, in his *Suppliants*, says,

§ Lib. i. Diod. Sic. wrote about 50 years B. C.—Parmenides about 450.

|| He wrote about 540 years B. C.

¶ Prometheus is fabled to have stolen fire from heaven, with which he animated a man of clay of his own forming. For this theft, he was chained to a rock in Mount Caucasus, and had a bird incessantly eating his liver, which grew as fast as it was consumed.

† Iliad. Lib. vii.

‡ Grotius, ubi supra.



“ Permit the dead to be entombed in earth,  
 “ From whence we all into this body came,  
 “ And when we die, the spirit goes to air,  
 “ To earth the body ; for we cannot possess  
 “ Life, only for a time ; the earth demands  
 “ It back again.”

All which agrees with Gen. iii. 19, Eccl. xii. 7. §

CENSORINUS observes, that “ DEMOCRITUS,  
 “ the Abderite, was of opinion, that men were first  
 “ formed of clay and water, and EPICURUS was of  
 “ the same mind.” ||

EURYSUS, the Pythagorean asserted, that man’s  
 body resembles that of other creatures, because it  
 is composed of the same materials, but that it is made  
 by the best workman, who formed it according to  
 the pattern of himself. ¶

PLINY mentions, that HIPPARCHUS acknowl-  
 edged the relation between man and the stars, and  
 considered our souls as parts of heaven.\*

NUMENIUS held, that the spirits of all the liv-  
 ing were produced by the *Spirit of God*. †

IN LINUS, HESIOD, and many other Greek  
 writers, mention is made of the forming of animals

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§ Ibidem. Euripides was a celebrated Greek tragic poet. He flourished about 450 years B. C.

|| Ibid.

¶ Ibidem.

\* Ibid. Hipparchus flourished 129 years B. C.

† Patrick on Gen. i. 2. Numenius was a Greek philosopher, and flourished in the 2d century.

—of man's formation after the divine image, and his dominion over other creatures.†

VIRGIL affirms, that the divine Spirit pervades the whole earth, sea and heaven—that men and beasts, birds and fish all derive from it their vital principles, which have the active force of fire.§ This opinion was, probably, borrowed from the Greeks, for PLUTARCH informs us, that all the Greek philosophers, except those who held the doctrine of a *vacuum* and *atoms*, supposed the universe to be animated, and governed by providence.

CICERO, in his book *de Nat. Deor.* mentions, that when GOD left all other creatures to feed on the ground, he made man upright, to excite him to view the heavens to which he was related, they being his former habitation.||

EPICHARMUS says, that man's reason is derived from that of GOD.¶

HORACE calls the soul

*A particle of divine breath.\**

† Grotius.

§ ——— Deum namque ire per omnes  
Terrasque tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum.  
Hinc pecudes, &c. *Georg. Lib. 4. v. 221.*

——— cœlum, ac terras, camposque liquentes,  
Lucentemque globum Lunæ, Titaniaque astra,  
Spiritus intus alit: totamque infusa per artus  
Mens, &c. *Æneid. L. vi. v. 724.*

|| Grotius. Cicero wrote about 60 years B. C.

¶ Ibid.

\* ———— divinæ particulam auræ.  
*Sat. ii. 79.*

JUVENAL† affirms, that we derive our reason from heaven, and that no other creatures are allowed it. For the author of nature gave *us* a soul, to *them* the breath of life.

OVID§ relates, that man was formed according to the image of GOD, who gave him dominion over other creatures.

MEGASTHENES, in his 15th book of STRABO, informs us, that in many things the INDIANS agree with the GREEKS—as that the world had a beginning, and will have an end—that it is of a spherical figure—that GOD, the creator and governor of it, penetrates all things, and that the world was made of water.||

VIRGIL¶ and OVID agree with MOSES in the order of the creation. Indeed, the first book of OVID's *Metamorphosis* is a good commentary upon the two first chapters of *Genesis*.

It appears from *Josephus*, *Philo*, and *Tibullus*, that the memory of the six days work, and the most ancient names of the seven days, were preserved among the GREEKS and ITALIANS; likewise among the CELTÆ, INDIANS, and SCLAVONIANS, according to *Philostratus*, and *Justin Martyr*.\*

† Grotius. Juvenal flourished about A. D. 110,

§ *Metamorph.* Lib. 1.

|| Grotius.

¶ *Eclog.* vi. v. 30—50.

\* Grotius.

HESIOD, HOMER, CALLIMACHUS, ARISTOBULUS, THEOPHILUS-ANTIOCHENUS, DIOGENES, and LUCIAN, observed, that the seventh day was sacred.\*

PHILO remarked, that the seventh day was so much observed over the whole world, that it might be very properly denominated *εορτη πανδημος*, the *universal festival*, kept by all people.†

DION CASSIUS observes, that the custom of computing time by weeks came originally from Egypt, and that it is very ancient. HERODOTUS and ISIDORUS tell us the same thing.‡

THE history of Adam and Eve, the tree of knowledge, and the tempting serpent, was formerly found among the HINDUS, and, if we may credit late voyagers, is still among the BRAHMANS, SIAMESE, and PERUVIANS.||

IN some few instances, where heathen nations have attempted to exhibit particular accounts of the formation of the world, we observe the most striking outlines of the Mosaic. The ancient TUSCANS and PERSIANS held, that the universe was made in six periods or times. The TUSCANS imagined, that God employed 12,000 years in all his creations. In the first thousand, they say, he made the heavens

\* Ibid. Patrick's Commentary.

† Patrick's Com. on Gen. ii. 3.

‡ Grotius, ubi supra.

|| Stackhouse, p. 30, pref.

and earth ; in the second, the firmament ; in the third, the sea, and all the waters in the earth ; in the fourth, the great lights—the sun, moon, and stars ; in the fifth, every volatile reptile, and four-footed animal ; and in the sixth, man. It appears, therefore, that they supposed the first six thousand years had elapsed before the formation of man, and that mankind are to continue the remaining six thousand, at the conclusion of which period, the world will be destroyed.\*

THE PERSIANS supposed, that the six times completed 365 days. In the first, were created the heavens ; in the second, the waters ; in the third, the earth ; in the fourth, trees and plants ; in the fifth, animals ; and in the sixth, man.†

THE GRECIANS, according to Diodorus, held, that the heavens and earth were, at first, in one confused and mixed heap—that, upon a separation, the lightest and most fiery parts flew upwards, and became the lights of heaven—that the earth was, in time, drained of its water—that the moist clay of the earth, being enlivened by the heat of the sun, brought forth living creatures and men.‡

SOME of the old Hindu BRAHMANS, and modern BRAMINS, had a tradition, according to

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\* Univer. Hist. *Cosm.* p. 64.

† Ibid. p. 66.

‡ Shuckford's *Con.* p. 46, pref.



Mr. Lord||, that the materials, from which the world was made, being, at first, confusedly mixed together, were separated, by the Almighty, in the following manner. By blowing upon the waters, he first caused them to rise into a bubble, in the form of an egg, which, spreading itself, made the clear and transparent firmament. He then made, of the remaining water, a ball, which he denominated the lower world, and which he placed in the midst of the firmament. The solid part of this became the earth, and the more fluid, the sea. After this, he made the sun and moon, and placed them in the firmament. Having thus separated the elements, and assigned them to their proper places, he filled the earth, air, and sea, with living creatures. He then made out of the ground, man, and infused into him, life, and afterwards made him a companion, whom he called woman. The descendants of these, being, for their wickedness, destroyed by a deluge, he afterwards created three persons of greater perfection.

SOME among the CHINESE held, that all things were produced by GOD from a chaos—that the “heaven was first perfected, then the earth, after “which genii or spirits were produced, and then “man.” They affirmed, that their first man “was “generated from the chaos, as from an egg; the “shell of which became the heaven, the white the “air, and the yolk the earth.”\*

|| On the Banian religion. \* Univer. Hist. p. 70, Cosm.

It is worthy of remark, that, in these, and in other instances, which might be mentioned, the universe is said to have been made by degrees, and the last work is said to have been man.

It may not be improper to conclude these foreign testimonies by remarking, that very particular and striking traditions have been found, among almost all nations, respecting the *primitive state of man* and his *apostacy*, the *deluge*, the *tower of Babel*, and the *subsequent confusion of tongues*.||

|| It is almost needless to observe, that if the Mosaic history of any of these events be established, his account of the creation will be of course.

The following are some of the most striking collateral evidences of the PRIMITIVE STATE OF MAN, and his FALL.

The EGYPTIANS inform us, that, at first, men lived in great simplicity, their bodies being naked. *Grotius, de ver. rel. Chr. Lib. 1. § 16.*

PLATO, in his *Politics*, says, that God fed the first men, as man feeds the inferior creatures; and, likewise, that they lived without garments, in the open air. *Ibidem.*

DIODORUS SICULUS says, likewise, that they were naked, and wanted fires and dwellings. *Idem.*

DICARCHUS mentions, that the ancients, who were nearest to the Gods, were of such an excellent disposition, and lived such exemplary lives, that they were called a golden race. *Ibidem.* Dicearchus was a peripatetic philosopher, and wrote 310 years B. C.

The Elysian fields, the garden of Abdonis and the Hesperides, the Ortygia and Toprobane of the ancient POETS and PHILOSOPHERS, are evidently borrowed sketches of the terrestrial paradise of Moses.

The ancients appear to have had some notion of the *tree of life*, when they speak of the *nectar* and *ambrosia*, which preserved the immortality of the Gods, and *acosy*, the great panacea celebrated by the poets. *Nicholls' Conference with a Devil, Vol. 1.*

It appears from STRABO, that the Indians held, “that the first men, through fulness and plenty, fell into wickedness, which condition Jupiter abhorring, altered the state of things, and ordered them a life of labor.” *Grotius.*

BEROSUS, as he is quoted by Abydenus and Alexander Polyhistor, mentions, that man, in the most ancient times, fell from a state of innocence. *Joseph. Antiq.* Berolus wrote about 280 years B. C.

PLATO's fable of Porus' getting drunk in Jupiter's garden, was, probably, derived from the ancient accounts of Adam's fall in the

It does not appear that the heathen ever discovered these, and similar truths, by any method

garden of Eden. In his *Politics*, he gives a full account of Adam's state of innocence, in the fable of Saturn's golden age. Instead of construing this, according to the literal sense of the poets, he complains of the want of an interpreter to give it its true meaning. *Shuckford's Connexion*.

The old GREEKs were accustomed, in their mysteries, to carry about a serpent, at which time, they were instructed to cry *Eva*. In this, there appears to be an exultation of the devil over the fall of our first mother. There are frequent instances, among idolatrous nations, of his displaying this triumph, under the figure of a serpent. It is mentioned by authors, that there are some priests in ASIA, who, at particular times, carry about a serpent, in a brazen vessel, and, as they attend it with music and charms in verse, the serpent raises itself, and thrusts the head of a beautiful virgin out of its mouth. A similar practice has been discovered in the WEST-INDIA islands. *Nicholls' Conference*.

The ARABS anciently believed, that the devils were transformed into serpents. *Univ. History Lib. 1*.

PHERECYDES called the beginner of evil, *Ophionea*, that is, a demon in the shape of a serpent. *Patrick on Gen. iii. 24*.

Were all the traditions respecting the DELUGE collected, they would fill a large volume. Perhaps a nation cannot be found, which has not some notion, that there was once an universal deluge. The ancient and modern heathen nations generally agree, that it was occasioned by the extreme wickedness of the giants upon the earth, which, they say, was so great, that one family, only, was preserved in a ship. A few fix upon the very day, which Moses does, for the beginning of the deluge, and, likewise, speak of the dove sent from the ark to explore the waters. Almost all agree, that the people, after they left the ark, built an altar, and sacrificed to the Gods. See Gen. viii. 20.

The testimonies, respecting the TOWER OF BABEL, and the DISPERSION, are, likewise, very numerous. Indeed, all the most ancient historians, except Sanchoniathon, wrote, that mankind used one and the same language, till the overthrow of a vast tower, when a great number of tongues was introduced by the Gods, and mankind were dispersed over the face of the whole earth. The following accounts from ABYDENUS, EUPOLEMUS, and the SYBILLINE ORACLES, are particularly observable.

ABYDENUS, as he is quoted by *Eusebius*, relates, that the first men, boasting of the bulk and strength of their bodies, built a tower, where Babylon stands, which was so prodigiously high, that it appeared to reach the skies, but the Gods overthrew it upon their heads. *Stackhouse's Hist. of Bib. Vol. 1. p. 303*. Abydenus flourished about 300 years B. C.

EUPOLEMUS, as he is cited by *Alexander-Polyhistor*, wrote, "That the city of Babylon was first built by giants, who escaped from the flood—that these giants built the most famous tower" recorded "in history, and that this tower was dashed in pieces, by the almighty power of God, and the giants dispersed over the

of reasoning. On the contrary, they universally acknowledge, that they received them from their ancestors, who were wiser than themselves. Almost all the Eastern nations affirm, that they derived their knowledge of the origin of the universe, and of the history of the first ages, from certain records or institutes, written by some illustrious person among their ancestors, or delivered to him by the Gods. Sanchoniathon, Berofus, Ctesias, and Manetho, some of the most ancient profane historians, assert the same thing. Orpheus, Rhadamanthus, Minos, Lycaon, and Triptolemus, the first Grecian legislators, confess, that their wisdom and learning were brought from Egypt. All the Grecian historians agree, that the knowledge of the Greeks came, originally, from Egypt or Asia. Plato, Pythagoras, and Thales, the originals of Greek philosophy, ob-

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“ whole earth.” *Stackhouse*. Eupolemus wrote about two centuries B. C.

It is recorded in the SYBILLINE ORACLES, “ That, at a certain  
 “ time, when the whole world spake the same language, the people  
 “ of those days gathered together, and raised a tower, which they  
 “ carried up” to such an “ extravagant height, that it looked as  
 “ if they had proposed the scaling of heaven from the top of it ; but  
 “ the Gods let the winds loose upon it, which, with a violent blast,  
 “ beat it to the ground. The builders” were “ struck with an utter  
 “ forgetfulness of their native tongue, and a new unknown language”  
 “ guage” was “ substituted instead of it, wherein not one man of  
 “ them understood his fellow.” *Joseph. Antiq. Lib. i. c. 5.*

It will be needless to adduce any more particular testimonies, but it may generally be remarked, that the building of the *tower of Babel*, and the giants attempting to scale heaven, are the common tale of every poet.

It is worthy of observation, that traditions are found among all nations, respecting the most important events prior to the dispersion, and that no subsequent event recorded in scripture, is supported by such an universal tradition. This is, unquestionably owing to the separation of mankind from one another, and their speaking different languages.



serve, that they travelled into other countries, and obtained their knowledge of physiology from the records of barbarians. They all acknowledge, that these nations did not pretend to the invention of what they received from them, but that they had it from their forefathers. They directed them to search their records, for there, alone, could their inquiries be answered. Plato, in particular, acknowledged this very freely. He affirmed, that the Grecians derived all their most valuable learning from the traditions of barbarians, and often speaks of Phœnician and Syrian, that is, *Hebrew* fables, as the ground work of many of their notions. Aristotle was the first, who rendered philosophy disputative. He and his followers endeavoured to form systems of their own, which, as we have observed, being filled with inconsistencies and allegories, were both trifling and inconclusive.\*

If then, the heathen, as they confess, obtained these truths from tradition, or certain writings, which came from some celebrated personages among their ancestors, the question very naturally arises, whence *they* received them? and the most rational answer is, from Moses or Adam, to whom they must have been revealed by God. *They*, certainly, were as unable to discover them by the powers of reason, as all succeeding philosophers. In-

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\* Warburton's Div. Leg. Lib. iii. Sec. 2. Shuckford's Con, pref.



deed, so far from having learning sufficient to invent, or discover, we find they could not tell the true meaning of many of them.

SEVERAL naturalists, among whom are BUFFON, DE LUC, and HUTTON, have attempted to prove, from the great number of shells in the earth—the arrangement of its interior strata, and the appearance of its surface, that it occupied a longer time in its formation, and is much more ancient than is represented, either in sacred or profane history.

DR. HUTTON\* supposes, that the earth was made entirely from the exuviae of sea animals, particularly *cockle-shells* and *oysters*, and, therefore, must have been a vast period of time in forming. This, he argues, from the innumerable quantities of them—their profound depths under ground, and the oleaginous and bituminous particles with which they are accompanied, and which, he thinks, were formed from vegetative bodies. He appears to have adopted the opinion, that the world is eternal, for he says, he observes not the “smallest vestige of a beginning, nor any prospect of an end.” But it is easy to prove from his method of reasoning, that the world had a beginning. He allows, that every thing in nature is successive, and, certainly, where every thing is successive, there must, of

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\* Encyclopedia, article Earth.

course, have been once a beginning, and an original cause. He holds, that the present surface of the earth was, for many thousand years, the bottom of the sea. But, if this was the case, it is very astonishing, that there are no coral rocks among all the marine monuments on land. They grow, in vast quantities, from the bottom of the sea, and, sometimes, to such an height, as to form islands, instances of which are found in the Pacific ocean. If, therefore, the present dry land was once the bottom of the sea, the deficiency of these rocks upon it, is a proof, that it could not have been so a long time.

WE may, possibly, not be able to account for all the shells, which are to be found in the earth ; but they may, generally, be ascribed to the deluge. This must have brought great numbers of fish upon the land, for they would very naturally have deserted the ocean, and fixed upon new beds ; and there was sufficient time, during the continuance of the flood, for a vast many to grow. A small proportion, only, of the whole of these, particularly the shell-fish, would have been able to follow the waters in their retreat. It is impossible to determine, what would be the effect of the pressure of a body of water, five or six miles deep, which must have been the depth of it, at that time, if it covered all

the mountains upon the globe. It, certainly, would have made the earth exceedingly soft, and, of course, have pressed these shell-fish to great depths in it. They might, indeed, have been forced into clefts of rocks, and consolidated by petrification, for there are instances, where, not only marine, but terrestrial animals, have been discovered incrustated in strata of stone. In whatever situations, therefore, fossils are found, we have no reason to think they could not have been caused by the deluge, as we cannot fully ascertain the effect of such a body of water, for so long a time, upon the earth.\*

BUFFON has not been much less ridiculous, in his mode of reasoning upon this subject, than Hutton. He supposes with him, that the surface of the earth was the bottom of the sea for a great length of time. He thinks, farther, that the mountains were made by the sediments of the tides, and that they must have been forming therefore a very long period of time. It is, indeed, probable, that these sediments might be very much accumulated, but it is impossible to conceive how they should reach higher than the surface of the water, much more, how they should be thrown up five or six miles. Islands, he says, are mountains in the seas, exactly like those upon the land. If, therefore,

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\* In the time of the flood, mankind would naturally fly to places, in which they might think themselves safe, and there perish together. This may account for the vast heaps of bones found in the rock of Gibraltar, Dalmatia, and other places. *Encyclopedia art. Earth.*

the present surface of the earth was the bottom of the ocean, for a great length of time, it is very unaccountable, that we find no mountains, the tops of which resemble the islands of Madagascar, Borneo, or Great-Britain.\*

It is, indeed, impossible to account for the formation of the earth, from natural causes. The expression of Moses, *In the beginning God created the heaven and earth*, exhibits a more rational idea on this subject, than all the opinions of these philosophers. The chaos of Burnet and Woodward, the hollow globe of Hutchinson, the comet of Whiston, the sediments of Buffon, and the exuviae of Hutton, cannot, of themselves, form a world. Without having recourse to a divine power, we must, necessarily, be involved, like several of these philosophers, in the greatest difficulties and absurdities.

THE beds of lava in the neighbourhood of volcanoes, have, likewise, been appealed to for a proof of the great antiquity of the world. Some of these beds, says Brydone, in the vicinity of Mount Ætna, are covered with considerable thickness of earth; and he mentions one, which issued from the mountain, in the time of the second Punick war†, (about 2000 years ago) on which there is ve-

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\* The arguments of de Luc exhibit, if possible, greater weakness than those of Hutton and Buffon. They are too contemptible to merit a serious answer.

† Brydone's Tour through Sicily and Malta, Vol. 1. p. 122.

ry little soil and vegetation. A pit has been dug through seven different strata, between each one of which there is a thick bed of earth. From the circumstance, that a stratum of lava 2000 years old, is not yet covered, Recupero has labored to prove, that the lowest of these seven strata must have been emitted, at least 14,000 years ago.\* But this argument completely vanishes, when we reflect, that the bed of lava 2000 years old, is so situated, that it constantly receives the wash of the sea, and is exposed to the violence of winds and rains. It would be impossible, therefore, for a thick bed of earth to be formed upon it, in any period of time.† The local situation of the seven strata is acknowledged to be materially different. Should this answer be considered as incomplete, it may be observed, that there is no satisfactory evidence, that the lava in question, is the very same, which was formed 2000 years ago. But allowing this, we have full proof, that a stratum of lava may be covered with a bed of earth, in about 250 years. It is well known, that Herculaneum was destroyed in the year 79, which was above 1700 years ago. And we are informed by Sir William Hamilton, whose authority is unquestionable, that there are six different strata, over that, which covers the town, and caused its destruction, *with veins of good soil between*

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\* Ibidem p. 141.

† There are a few crevices in it, where the soil is so deep, that it supports large trees.



*them.*† Instead, therefore, of its employing 14,000 years, to form seven different strata, with as many beds of earth, we find, that all this can be accomplished, in about 1700 years.

THE extended accounts of ancient nations have, likewise, been alledged as an argument, that the world is much more ancient than it is represented to be in scripture. But a candid enquiry into the origin of the ancient computations will convince us, that they are the offspring of national pride—that they are themselves extremely contradictory—inconsistent with just philosophical reasoning, and the advancement of mankind in arts, sciences, and refinement. The only profane accounts of the most ancient nations, which are extant, are taken, either from the writings of ATHOTES or THOTH\*, SANCHONIATHON, MANETHO, BEROSUS, or CTESIAS. From what remains of these writings, it appears, that the records of most nations fall far short of the flood. It has, indeed, been much questioned whether the histories of *Thoth* and *Sanchoniathon* are not mere fables; and

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† See Watson's Letters to Gibbon. Sir William Hamilton was a British ambassador at Naples, and therefore, had a good opportunity to ascertain the fact.

\* Thoth is generally thought to have been the *Pathrusim* of Moses. See *Gen.* x. 14. He was the son of Mizraim, during whose life, he was his secretary and assistant in all his undertakings. After his death, he became king of Thebes. He is supposed to have been the inventor of letters. The Egyptians say, that he wrote 42 books, in which was contained all their civil and religious science. He died about 2000 years B. C. and was succeeded by a person of the same name, who was, likewise, much celebrated.

*Warburton's Divine Legation.*

some have proceeded so far as to affirm, that such men never existed. But if *they* never lived, or if *their writings* were merely fabulous, the antagonists of Porphyry, Apollinaris, Eusebius, and others, would certainly have discovered it, for as *they* agree remarkably with Moses, these men would have been deeply interested in such a disclosure. Their writings, it is true, have been much corrupted by later historians, and, therefore, it belongs to judicious writers, to separate what is fictitious, from what appears to be well authenticated. So far as this has been effected, it is plain, that the Egyptians and Phœnicians offer nothing authentic, which is anterior to the Mosaic account of the creation.† It is true, indeed, that they have extended the antiquity of the world to two or three hundred thousand years; but, to use the expression of Mr. Gray, “these accounts are now justly considered as the “fictions of national vanity, or the exaggerations “of erroneous computation.”

SANCHONIATHON‡ begins his Phœnician history with the origin of the world. He says, as has been remarked, that the first pair were Protogonus

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† Shuckford's Con. Vol. i. pref.

‡ Sanchoniathon wrote his history, according to Porphyry, Eusebius, and others, about 1000 years B. C. He says he collected his facts from the writings of Thoth, and some commentaries, which he received from Jerombalus, a priest of the God Jevo. Bochart, Huetius, Patrick, and others, are confident, that this Jerombalus was Gideon or Jerubbaal, (*see Judges vii. 32*) and the commentaries, the books of Moses, which contain the laws delivered by Jehovah; “for the remains we have of his writings plainly taste of the doctrine of Moses.” His works were translated from the Phœnician

and Æon, who were, unquestionably, Adam and Eve. This not only appears from their being the first of mankind, but, likewise, from their names, *πρωτογονος*, which signifies *the first born or produced*, and *αιων*, *life*: The latter bears a near resemblance to Eve, both in sound and sense. Æon, he says, was the first who discovered the fruit, that is gathered from trees, which appears to be an allusion to Eve's eating the forbidden fruit. Their issue, he relates, were *Genos* and *Genca*. *Genos*, if we omit the termination, is much like *Cain*.|| He says, that sons of vast bulk were begotten by some of their posterity,§ and that mankind made but a small progress in the arts, until the 7th or 8th generation.¶ From Protogonus to Misor, or Mizraim, he makes eleven generations, and Moses twelve, so that he falls only one generation short of Moses, which is, probably, owing to his not giving an account of the flood.\* From Misor to his own time, he agrees with scripture.†

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into the Greek tongue, by Philo Byblius, who lived in the reign of Vespasian, Titus, &c. They are quoted by Porphyry, Eusebius, Theodoret and others. *Patrick on Judges vi. 32. Univer. Hist. Grotius.*

|| The Greek word *Cainos*, whence the Latin *Genos* comes, was, probably, derived from the Hebrew word *Kana*; the root from which Cain was formed. *Genea* may signify the wife of Cain as *Caia* does of *Caius* in law.

§ Gen. vi. 4.

¶ Moses places the chief artists of the posterity of Cain in the 6th and 7th generations. See Gen. iv. 19—25.

\* As the object of Sanchoniathon was to write a history and defence of idolatry, instead of tracing mankind, like the sacred historian, in the line of Seth, he confines himself to the idolatrous line of Cain. He has studiously omitted an account of the deluge, for it was the interest of the heathen world to bury it in oblivion.

† Univ. Hist. Grotius de Ver. Rel.

MANETHO\*, in his Egyptian history, pretends to produce antiquities of Egypt, which reach higher than the creation by many thousand years. He first gives an account of their Gods, then of their Demi-gods and Heroes, and, lastly, of their Kings, in which order historians have generally treated of the Egyptian antiquities. It was universally believed among the Egyptians, that their Gods had all reigned, and these, it is well known, were the luminaries of heaven. The complete revolution of a star or God, it is likely they denominated its reign, for, according to their computations, an entire revolution of the heavens comprised 36,525 years, which is the time he assigns to the reign of their Gods. This computation, therefore, is purely astronomical. After the accomplishment of this period, there reigned eight Demi-gods, in the space of 217 years, and fifteen Heroes, whose reigns took up 443 years; to these succeeded the Kings, the first of whom was Menes. If we suppose this Menes to have been the Mizraim of Moses, it will follow, that the Demi-gods and Heroes were antediluvians, whose reigns included 660 years: And if we consider, that man was first placed in Chaldea, it will appear highly probable, that Egypt was peo-

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\* Manetho was an Egyptian by birth, and, for some time, high priest, and keeper of the sacred records of that nation. He flourished in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, by whose order he wrote the history of Egypt, about 250 years B. C. There are now but a few fragments of it, which remain in the writings of Africanus, Eusebius, and Syncellus.



pled about that length of time before the deluge. But all which he offers of the times preceding Menes, particularly of the Gods, he pretends to have taken from some pillars in the land of Seriad; and he is so unfortunate as to inform us, that the inscriptions upon these pillars were translated into the Greek language, by the second Mercury, who lived *before* that language was formed. It may farther be observed, that no other Egyptian historian speaks of these pillars, and Diodorus does not, in a single instance, quote him as a writer of any credit. There is nothing in his dynasties beside names, except, in a few instances, a story of the Nile's overflowing its banks with honey, of the moon's growing larger, of a speaking lamb, and seven kings, who reigned successively as many days. He wrote his history a short time after the making of the Septuagint version. It is rational, therefore, to conclude, that, seeing the antiquities of the Hebrews, he became jealous of the honor of his own nation, and hence was induced to extend their accounts, and to make it appear, that they were much more ancient than those of Moses.\*

BEROSUS,† in his Chaldean history, as it is

\* Shuckford's Con. Lib. 1. Stackhouse's Hist. Apparatus.

† Berofus was, by birth, a Chaldean. He informs us in his writings, that he was born during the minority of Alexander the Great. He wrote his history of Chaldea and Babylon, about 280 years B. C. There are now but a few fragments of it, which we have in the writings of Abydenus, Alexander Polyhistor, and Josephus. *Univ. Hist. Vol. 1. Pref.*



transmitted to us by Abydenus and Alexander Polyhistor, coincides remarkably with Moses. The substance of his accounts is, that there were ten kings in Chaldea before the flood, which is the Mosaic number of generations from Adam to Noah. The last of these kings, Xisuthrus, being warned in a dream of the destruction of mankind by a deluge, preserved himself, and his family, in a ship.\* In the several descendants of Noah, and their respective ages, to Nabonassar, king of the Chaldeans, he agrees with the Hebrew scriptures. He is quoted by Pliny, Tacitus, Tertullian, Clement, Eusebius, and others, which is a proof that he was a writer of good authority.†

CTESIAS,‡ the Persian historian, says he ob-

\* His account of this preservation is too remarkable to be omitted. He says, that Xisuthrus, being notified in a dream, by Chronus or Saturn, of the destruction of mankind, at a certain time, by a flood, was directed to build a ship, and go into it with his wife, children, and dearest friends—that he was, likewise, admonished to make a provision of food, and take into his vessel fowls and fourfooted beasts, and that he acted according to this direction. When the flood was come, and began to abate, he sent out some birds, which, finding no place to rest upon, returned to the ship. After a few days, he let out some more, but they came back daubed with mud. Some days after, he let them go a third time, but they came back to the ship no more. Xisuthrus, understanding by this, that the earth appeared again above the waters, took down some boards from the ship, and found that it rested upon a mountain. A short time after, he, his wife and pilot went out of the ship, built an altar, offered sacrifice to the Gods, and were never again seen by those in the ship. But after they had sought for them in vain, and sacrificed to the Gods, all those, who were left behind, went to Babylon, where they raised temples, and built cities. This alludes to the settling in Shinar, and the building of Babel, Erech, Nineveh, &c. See Gen. x. *Shuckford's Gen. V. 1. p. 16. Univ. Hist. V. 1. p. 195.*

† Joseph. con. Apion.

‡ Ctesias was a native of Cnidos. He was a physician to Artaxerxes Mnemon, and lived in his court 17 years. He flourished about

tained the materials for his history from the royal records of Persia.\* He relates that the *first* Assyrian king began to reign about 1500 years before Nabonassar; and it appears from scripture, that there was that number of years from Nimrod to Ahaz, king of Judah, who was cotemporary with Nabonassar. This period is, likewise, confirmed by the astronomical observations found at Babylon, by Callisthenes, the philosopher, who accompanied Alexander the Great in his expeditions. These observations extended backward 1903 years, and Alexander took Babylon about 420 years after Nabonassar.† They must have been begun, therefore, not many years after the time fixed upon by Moses for the building of Babylon. Ctesias' catalogue of Assyrian kings was considered as accurate by Diodorus Siculus, Cephaleon, Trogus Pompeius, and others.

THE *Chronology* of the HINDUS exceeds that of all other nations for absurdity. But, if it be examined with attention, it will be found, like the Egyptian, to be merely astronomical. Mr. Paterfon has made it appear from a particular attention to it, that the 4,320,000 years, of which the Hindus say their four ages consist, amount in fact, to

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400 years B. C. His history of Persia consisted of 23 books, the first six of which contained the history of the Assyrians, and the remaining 17, the whole history of Persia from Cyrus to the author's death. He, likewise, wrote a history of the Indies. *Univ. Hist. pref.*

\* That there were such records, see *Ezra iv. 15. Esther vi. 1.*

† Bedford's Scripture Chronology. Shuckford's Con.

precisely 25,920 of our years, which is the time the fixed stars take up in their revolution.\* According to the calculations of the Hindus, we are now in the first day†, of the first month, of the fifty-first year of Brahma's age. They say, that the first Menu‡ of this day was surnamed *the Son of the Self-existent*: “in his time the Deity descended at a  
 “ *Sacrifice*; and, by his wife *Satarupa*, he had two  
 “ distinguished sons, and three daughters. This  
 “ pair was created for the multiplication of the hu-  
 “ man species, after that new creation of the world,  
 “ which the Brahmans call the *Lotos creation*.” In the reign of the seventh Menu, surnamed the child of the sun, the Hindus believe, that the world was destroyed by a flood,|| and that none but himself, and the seven Rishi's, his intimate companions, and their several wives, together with pairs of animals, were preserved in an ark.§ They say, that the seven Rishi's were not fathers of human families, and that all mankind, therefore, descended from this Menu.¶

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\* By comparing the two periods 3,320,000 and 25,925, we find, that among their common divisors, are 6, 9, 12, &c. 18, 36, 72, 144, &c. which, “with their several multiples, especially in a decuple progression, constitute some of the most celebrated periods of the Chaldeans, Greeks, Tartars, and even of the Indians.” Those, who wish for a complete view of the Chronology of the Hindus, are referred to the ninth Dissertation in Sir William Jones' *Asiatick Researches*.

† A day of Brahma is a thousand great ages in length, each one of which consists of twelve thousand divine years.

‡ In every day of Brahma, they hold that fourteen Menus are successively invested by him, with the sovereignty of the earth.

|| This general destruction is the subject of a sacred poem among them, consisting of 14,000 stanzas.

§ Jones' *Asia*. p. 208—215.

¶ *Ibid.* p. 223. Sir William Jones obtained much of his informa-

It cannot be questioned, but that the creation in the time of the first Menu, called, by the Brahmans, *Lotos creation*, is the same with that recorded in the book of Genesis—that the *Sacrifice*, at which they believe God descended, alludes to that of Abel, and that the story of the seventh Menu is the same with that of Noah.

It is highly probable from the agreement between the accounts, which ancient authors give of the Indian BACCHUS—the Hindu traditions concerning their first BUDDHA, and the Chinese traditions respecting their FOH, that they all relate to the same person, and that this person was the seventh Menu, or *Noah*. If this be established, it will prove, that the Hindus and Chinese had the same original,\* and that they were the immediate descendants of Noah.†——All profane authors agree, that BACCHUS was the founder of the Eastern nations, and many of them, that he lived in the first ages of the world. He came, they say, into India, before there were any cities built there, or armies suffi-

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tion relative to the Hindus, from a Sanscrit treatise *On Civil and Religious Duties*, which, they say, was revealed by Menu, the son of *Brahma*, but which was actually written between a thousand and fifteen hundred years B. C.

\* Sir William Jones has clearly traced the Hindus, Chinese, and Japanese, to Iran or Persia, from whence he has proved, that they emigrated upwards of 4000 years ago. He has, farther, made it very evident, that *that* country was the first which was settled after the deluge. See his *dissertation upon the Persians*.

† This further appears, from the consideration, that their religious doctrines, when freed from superstitious additions, “exhibit a correspondence with Patriarchal principles;” and, likewise, from several singular customs, which prevail among both nations. *Vid. Diss. Sic. Lib. 2. Jones’ Asia. p. 168, 169.*



cient to oppose him. It must have been, therefore, before the time of Ninus, for when he attempted to conquer that country, with a powerful army, he met with a very formidable resistance. It is mentioned by Diodorus, that the Indians have a tradition, that Bacchus was the first who pressed the grape and made wine ; and that he was twice born, and nourished in the thigh of Jupiter. He observes, that the reason why they said he was twice born was, “ because he was thought to have perished, “ with the rest of the world, in Deucalion’s flood, “ but GOD brought him again, as by a second nativity, into the sight of men, and they say, *mythologically*, that he came out of the thigh of Jupiter.\*” From these particulars, it is evident, that Bacchus can be no other than Noah.—It is related in the mythological system of the Hindus, that the nymph *Robini*, who presides over the fourth lunar mansion, and among whose numerous epithets, was *Cumudanayca*, or *delighting in a species of water-flower*, was the favorite mistress of *Soma*, or the moon, and that their offspring was *BUDHA*, regent of a planet. This *Budha*, the Indians observe, “ married *Ila*, “ whose father was preserved in a miraculous ark, “ from an universal deluge.”†——The Chinese alledge, that the mother of their first emperor *FOHI* was the daughter of heaven, surnamed *Flower-loving*. As she was walking on the bank of a river, she was

\* Diodorus Siculus, Lib. 1, 2, 3, 4. Shuckford’s Con. Lib. 6.

† Jones’ Asia. p. 166.



suddenly encompassed by a rainbow ; soon after which, she became pregnant, and, in process of time, was delivered of a son as radiant as herself, who, among other titles, had that of Sui, *or Star of the Year.*† This notion, probably, arose from the rainbow's first appearing to Noah. They say,|| that Fohi carefully bred seven kinds of creatures, which he was accustomed to sacrifice to the great Spirit : and Moses informs us, that Noah took into the ark of *every clean beast by sevens*, and when he came out, took of *every clean beast*, &c. and offered burnt offerings. They farther declare, that Fohi was sometimes called Paohi, on account of his sacrifice ; and Noah, it is likely, received his name, on account of the grant of animal food for man, which he obtained by his offering. Their writers generally agree, that he lived 2950 years before Christ, and, according to Usher, Noah was born about that time. These particulars make it very evident, that Fohi was Noah, and the same with the Indian Bacchus, and Buddha.

THE CHINESE accounts, however, have been supposed to have been taken from records, which reach much higher than the history of Moses. This people have ever, indeed, been laboring to prove, that their antiquity is much greater than that of any other nation on the globe. “ They

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† Ibid.

|| Vid. Le Comte's History of China, p. 317. Lond. 1739.

“are,” says Warburton,|| “the proudest and  
 “vainest people on earth, arrogating to themselves  
 “the invention and improvement of every kind of  
 “art and science.” But, notwithstanding all their  
 pretences, Sir William Jones has proved from the  
 Sanscrit institutes of civil and religious science,  
 from tradition, and the striking resemblances be-  
 tween the two nations, that they were originally  
 a colony of Hindus, named *Chinas*.§ This colony  
 separated from its parent country nearly four thou-  
 sand years ago, and settled in *Shensi*, a province in  
 the Western parts of China. They, for a long time,  
 lived in an unsettled, and, it is likely, unrefined,  
 state. It appears, indeed, from the writings of  
 Confucius himself, that the Chinese empire, as it is  
 now called, was in its infancy so late as the twelfth  
 century B. C. He declared, in the *Lun Yu*, that,  
 “although he, like other men, could relate, as mere  
 “lessons of morality, the histories of the first and  
 “second imperial houses, yet, *for want of evidence*,  
 “he could obtain no certain information of them.”^

BUT should what has been observed fail to  
 convince those, who have been accustomed to vene-  
 rate the Chinese antiquities, it may here be observ-  
 ed, that *Hoanti*, their eleventh emperor, ordered  
 all their historical records to be destroyed†, 213  
 years B. C. and that they have not any work, in an

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|| Julian, p. 239.

§ See his Dissertation on the Chinese.

^ Ibid.

† This law was so rigorously executed, that many learned men  
 were put to death for concealing their books. *Du Halde's Ch. Hist.*

intelligible character, above 2200 years old.† It cannot but be acknowledged, therefore, that we have little reason to credit the most ancient accounts of this empire, and we shall not be taxed with incredulity, if, with all due deference to the *great* Voltaire, we disbelieve such fabulous things, as the sun's not setting for ten days, and the clouds' raining gold for three days together.

THE GRECIANS pretended to so great antiquity, that they treated those with contempt, who assigned them any founder of their nation, but they called themselves *genuines terræ* or *aborigenes*. Their traditions, however, are equally imaginary with those we have mentioned.§ They could produce no dates, according to Gray||, and others, above the times of Cyrus and Cambyfes, who lived between 500 and 600 years B. C. and no historical information of the times preceding the Olympiads. Plutarch proceeded back no farther than the times of Theseus, who lived not long before the ministry of *Samuel*, for he affirmed, that all beyond him was *nothing but monstrous and tragical fictions*. Herodotus, who is called the *Father of History*, and who wrote between four and five centuries B. C. began his history with fable; and Thucydides declared,

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† Gray's Key to the Old Testament, p. 84. Stackhouse's Hist. of Bible, p. 79, *Appar.* Du Halde's History of China.

§ An argument has been drawn, by Voltaire, for the great antiquity of the world, from Plato's Atlantis, which, he says, was buried in the ocean 9000 years before his time. But Plato himself acknowledged this account to be a mere fignient.

|| Key, p. 85.

that he could collect no authentic information of the times preceding the Peloponnesian war.†

IN a word, the extended accounts of these, and all other nations, are unworthy of the smallest degree of credit. They have not the least appearance of truth, and every rational argument convinces us, that they are absolutely false. But in the accounts presented us in the Bible, we observe nothing “fabulous or romantic, and no excursions “into ages, infinite and innumerable.” We here see a history written by a person, who lived several hundred years previously to any other historian, which makes the world about 5800 years old\*,

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† Vid. Strabo's Geography, Lib. xvii.

\* The creation of the world began, according to Dr. Usher, on Sunday, Oct. 23, 4004 years before the birth of Christ. The Septuagint version places it 5872, and the Samaritan 4700 years before our era. So that according to Usher, from the creation to this time, is 5802 years—according to the Septuagint, 7670, and according to the Samaritan, 6498. Usher, who followed the Hebrew, is generally considered as the most accurate chronologer. From the creation to the deluge, the Hebrew makes 1656 years—the Septuagint 2262, and the Samaritan 1307. St. Austin says, that the antediluvian chronology of the original Septuagint agreed with our present Hebrew copies. The variations, he adds, were made by the first transcribers, who either supposed, that the time fixed upon for men to be fathers was too short, considering the length of their lives, or that the years before the flood were lunar instead of solar. They, therefore, added 600 years before the births of Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalalel, Jared, and Methuselah, and subtracted the same number from the length of their lives afterwards. They, likewise, he thinks, through mistake, added six years to the life of Lamech before the birth of Noah. As to the Samaritan version, St. Jerome informs us, that there were copies of it in his time, whose chronology of this period agreed precisely with the Hebrew. From the deluge to the call of Abraham, the Hebrew makes 427 years—the Septuagint, 1207, and the Samaritan, 1077. The Samaritan chronology of this period is not of a piece with the rest of it; and since it bears such a similitude to the Septuagint, it is very likely that it was transcribed from it. The differences between the Greek and Hebrew computations may be reduced to two heads. 1. The Septuagint makes the patriarchs fathers 100 years later than the Hebrew, for the reason, doubtless, which was before assigned. 2. It adds a patriarch not mentioned in the Hebrew, *viz.* Cainan, so that it makes eleven generations from Shem



which gives a credible account of the creation, of the origin of man, of the first institution of civil government, and of the invention of the arts and sciences.

THE truth of Christianity is very intimately connected with that of this part of the history of Moses. If the world was formed previously to the creation of man, it follows, that our knowledge of its formation must have come originally from God. If, therefore, we are convinced that the Mosaic account is true, we must allow it to be a revelation, and, of course, admit the truth of the scriptures both of the Old and New-Testament. And such is the evidence with which it is supported, that they, who refuse to believe it, *would not be persuaded though one should rise from the dead.*

to Abraham, instead of ten. But it may be observed, that Africanus and Eusebius both took their accounts of these times from the ancient copies of the Septuagint, and yet, have no such person as Cainan among the postdiluvian patriarchs: It is probable, therefore, that some transcriber, thro' inattention, inserted an antediluvian name among the postdiluvians, and that other copies were taken from this one, so that this name, in time, became generally inserted. It is, however, said, that St. Luke would not have placed it in his genealogy, if it had been erroneously inserted in the Septuagint. But it cannot be proved that St. Luke did place it in his genealogy. It is, on the contrary, more likely, that learned men, finding it in some of the Greek copies, and not in Luke, might put it in the margin of their Bibles, and that later editors, finding it there, might insert it in the text.—From the vocation of Abraham to the birth of Christ, the Hebrew and Samaritan agree:—from the vocation to the founding of the Temple, the Septuagint falls short of them 40 years; but from the founding of the Temple to the birth of Christ all three of them agree. The Hebrew computations are supported by a perfect agreement of all the Hebrew copies—the paraphrase of Onkelos, written about the time of Christ, and the vulgar Latin, which has been in use above a thousand years. See *Ussers Chronology, Part 1. Universal History, Vol. 1, and Shuckford's Connexion, V. 1.*

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